

## A SERMON.

DELIVERED BY THE REV. HENRY T. MILLER, D. D., OF CHICAGO.

On Sunday, August 9, in the Westminster Presbyterian Church, Bloomfield.

(Published by request.)

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him."—1 John, 3:2.

If you were ever in Paris and did not visit the Jardin des Plantes, you missed one of the sweetest attractions of the whole city. You reach it by boat on the Seine, from the pier nearest the Louvre, and for a fare of twenty centimes are at the journey's end. On the way you go under five stone bridges, with the letter N, which Napoleon cut on them, chipped off, and past Notre Dame and the Hotel de Ville and the statue of Henry IV, and scores of other buildings and statues, stirring one with their strange history.

Reaching the Jardin des Plantes at once you are on the ground where the centuries have walked. It was founded 264 years ago, and every age has but added to its beauty. Buffon was at one time its director. Cuvier here lectured in its amphitheatre, and Humboldt presented it with a collection of 4,500 plants from America, 3,000 of which were of species before unknown.

But the greatest attraction to me there was the cedar of Lebanon. No tourist ever failed to stand under its branches. Of all trees I have ever looked upon, no tree in no land ever stirred me as did that. It is twelve feet in circumference. It is one hundred and twenty feet up to the first limb. Its top is a swaying, drooping canopy of deepest green. It was brought from the mountains of Syria and planted here 155 years ago, and what sights has it not looked upon since. The doves were cooling in its branches, and the linets and chaffinches were flitting in and out among its cones in whistling flocks, and I sat down beside the great trunk and began to think.

I thought of its native home. It grew on the summits where Hiram's choppers cut down the massive timbers for Solomon's Temple. I thought how it started, a mere sprout, with roots no longer than the breadth of your hand. You could have stepped on it and crushed out its life. It had two leaves or four leaves or a half-dozen leaves at most, and that was all. I thought how it pulled itself up toward the sun as the years went by, putting firmer fibre into limb and trunk until oriole and nightingale flew into its branches and built their nests. I then thought how it had been planted here, and for a century and a half had been broadening out and climbing up and sending the long fingers of its roots down among the coarse gravel.

Why, it was growing here before America was free. When planted, Louis XV. was on the throne of France and George II. on the throne of England. It lived through all the Napoleonic wars and saw the French revolution break in blood over the land. Marie Antoinette went from its shade to the guillotine block, and Robespierre fell in infamy, with its tossing branches, jubilant over his death. It knew of Austere and Waterloo and St. Helena, with the empire overthrown, and staggering to its feet again, and overthrown once more, till France knew no rest in the strife for power.

What a beginning and what a growing! In Syria you could have held it in your hand. With a single pull you could have torn it up and shaken the earth from its thread roots. It had no lodgement for birds, or limbs for the winds to play on, or cones to be shaken off into the hands of the great rocks below. And still here above me it held its swaying top well nigh to the clouds. All fowl of every wing flew into its branches. When the tempest came it laughed at its fury, and threw away the winds its resinous cones to show how little it cared for the rocking.

The thought has come that in this we have a little hint of the great change that is destined to take place in you and me. I do not suppose that to-day we have any conception of it. It is so vast in breadth of time and height of glory that its surpassing magnificence is beyond all our imaginings. And still it is coming. As surely as God lives and His word is true, we are to be changed into a glory like unto the Son of Man.

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him."

And first, we shall be like Him in our riches.

We are very poor now. None of us get together any large wealth. We go out with our muck-rakes and scrape the fields all over and have little to show for it. A few sticks and a few stones and a stray stubble-stalk here and there, and that is all. I am constantly surprised that the great mass of the people have so little. There are hundreds of Seven Dials to one Piccadilly and hundreds of Canongates to one Queen Street. We live in common houses and eat at common tables and wear common clothes. Of course we want to do better and live better. There is not a person here but would like to be rich. That pot of gold at the end of the rainbow is what we are all running after. We would like to pick it up, pot and all, and make off with it without the shaking

out of a single piece. But somehow we never find it. Run, never so far, get never so tired, we still are as empty handed as ever. There is always a mountain yet to climb; there is always a bog yet to be waded over before we can come to the place where with a single scoop of the hand we can fill our pockets full.

But, blessed be God, this poverty is not to hold on forever. The time is coming, and that right soon, when we are going to be rich. Out of common houses, we are going into mansions. Up from common tables, we are going to feast with the King. Off with common clothes, we are going to put on robes of royalty. Tell me, if you can, all the unbounded wealth of the Son of God, and then I will tell you what our wealth is to be, for we are to be like Him.

Will not that be grand! Over in London I visited the house of John Wesley. It stands to-day just as he left it in every part. The rooms are small and the floors are uncarpeted and the furniture is plain. I went into his study where he wrote and prayed the Methodist Church into being, and one could scarcely believe that in place so common such a mighty work was done. You remember his epitaph, written by himself: "Here lieth the body of John Wesley, a brand plucked out of the burning, who died of consumption, not leaving, after his debts are paid, ten pounds behind him." That was poverty; but think of John Wesley to-day. For nearly a hundred years now he has been a millionaire, he has been a billionaire, he has been a trillionaire! All the wealth of heaven has been laid at his feet. Not a street of gold or chain of ivory or crown of amethyst but he has walked over, or sat upon, or lifted to his head. Abundance above abundance; luxury overtopping luxury, and the end is not yet.

Such munificence is to be ours. I care not how straightened your circumstances to-day. You may be the poorest man in the house. You may be a woman having no more than the widow with two mites, but it matters not. You are the child of a king. You have an inheritance incorruptible and undimmed and that fadeth not away in heaven. You have claims to an estate, composed with which Chatsworth and Versailles are mere pasture lots, filled with brambles and mullein stalks, where the sheep tear their wool and nibble at the parched grass.

Oh, the riches that are in store for all of God's children. The abundance is so great I cannot compute it. I go up one street of heaven looking at the mansions, and the cry is, "All are yours." I go up another street of heaven looking at the mansions, and the cry is, "All are yours." I wander out under the tree of life, with branches pulled down low with the weight of the fruit, and the cry is, "All are yours." I look off upon the hills, surft beaten with song and appeal with the ringing of bells, and the cry is, "All are yours." I wander into temples that never close, and meet processions that never halt, and look into eyes that never weep, and mingle with friends that never part, and the cry still is, "All are yours." And as these mighty possessions roll in upon me like great waves of the sea, I have to hold on fast, lest I be swept off and drowned in the emotions of gladness and thanksgiving and triumph!

But, again, we shall be like Him in our glorified forms.

We do not certainly know how the Master looked when upon earth. We have conventional pictures of Him which all will recognize, and yet no one can tell whether they are surely accurate. Raphael painted Him in the manger, with the magi bowing in adoration. Murillo painted Him as a child, with a face kissed of heaven itself. Rembrandt threw Him on the canvas as he stood blessing little children. Leonardo da Vinci shows Him breaking bread at the last supper; and Correggio and Rubens paint Him on the cross, with a look of suffering, that seemingly would have broken the hearts of his murderers.

But really we do not know whether one of these is true to life. With all the genius of the masters, they may have painted way off from his face as it actually was. And yet it really makes but little difference. Whatever his features on earth, we know that to-day they are glorified with a beauty beyond the shaping of any face our eyes have ever seen.

I have often thought of the transfiguration. It was a moment's putting on of the form He had in heaven. The face, why it became inexpressibly transcendent in the halo that surged over it. The raiment, why it glistened as though a thousand suns were burning in sleeve and skirt. Little wonder the Disciples fell full upon their faces. It was a sheen from the throne, and no one could stand before it.

And thus has been his glory in all the ages since. Blow out every candle of heaven, and the brightness coming from his form would pour a burning flood through every street from wall to wall. "The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb of the light thereof."

Oh, what effulgence flaming out from all his person. I suppose his face is brighter than our sun at high noon-day. I suppose the scarf over His shoulders is made of braided rainbows. I suppose

that when He walks a halo swims in the air long after He has passed by.

And something of like glory is to be ours if we ever reach heaven. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him." That is enough. If we can only take on a little of his glory, we will ask no more.

You know that some persons are strangely puzzled about the resurrection. They want to know what appearance our bodies will have coming up out of the grave. They ask what we shall leave off and what we shall put on, and whether our forms will be wholly material or wholly spiritual. For myself I do not care. It matters nothing to me what the body, so long as I positively know it is going to be glorious.

Think of it! A form like unto the son of man. Now we have to work hard. Our shoulders become stooped and our knuckles become knotted and the plow turns great furrows across our foreheads. We have little of real beauty. The years go by and each one chips us a little till we stand as mutilated statues, robbed of every attraction we may have had.

But oh, up there there is to be a restoration. All our lost beauty is to be brought back and multiplied a hundred fold. Even those who are positively ugly now will be made gloriously handsome. Wrinkles all out of the forehead, swellings all out of the knuckles, tan all out of the cheeks, lameness all out of the limbs, beautiful, beautiful!

In the Vatican you can see the Apollo Belvedere. No one knows the artist, and no one certainly knows what the figure is meant to tell. But it seems a god is standing before you, so perfect is it. The face is perfect, and the hands are perfect and the limbs are perfect. Should you pinch the arm, it surely seems the blood would rush to the surface and blotch it red. How the lines of beauty curve the whole form, but hear me when I say that just so beautiful are you to be in the mighty regeneration and restoration certain to come in the years that are ahead. Oh, what experiences you are to walk into! Off with the old, off with the weak, off with the ugly; and on with all that is young and strong and beautiful!

But, once more, we are to be like Christ in our sinlessness.

This was the one thing he brought from heaven. He did not bring many things. Coming to earth, the bundle in his hand was not large. Nearly all his possessions were left behind. Had you looked for his wealth, you would not have found that. Had you looked for his throne, you would not have found that. Had you looked for his robe of white, you would not have found that. There was scarcely anything He brought with Him coming into this world of ours. Just as Henry II., when his son was crowned, took off his royal robe, and put on a servant's apron, and served at the feast. So with our king coming to earth. Over the arm of the throne chair he threw his robe, and putting on a servant's apron, came not to be ministered unto, but to minister a servant of all.

And yet there was one thing He brought with Him, and that was the perfect sinlessness of his character. You may take his life from the Bethlehem feeding box to the day when He pulled the rough timber up Calvary, and in all that distance you shall not find one sin clinging to Him. I marvel at this. It is to me the miracle of all miracles that he should have gone through our muddy world unspattered of its filth. They mobbed Him so and they caricatured Him so, and they cursed Him so, that I wonder He did not lose all control, and rush upon them as the hurricane rushes when the lines are dropped loose upon its neck.

But no, He did not. In all the way there was absolute self-control. Others lost their temper, but He did not. Others played the hypocrite, but He did not. Others drank blood as out of a bowl, but He did not. He was gentle and kind and loving and forgiving, "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin."

And, Christian friends, that is to be our character in heaven, for we are to be like Him. This "old man" that now so bothers us, is to be thrown off, and we are to put on the "new man," even Christ Jesus. I hardly dare think of it, it seems so entrancing.

What is that now so troubles you. This is a beautiful world in which to live. Where in all the universe is there a brighter sun? Among all the planets where can we go and find sweeter flowers, or deeper seas, or higher mountains, or more ravishing music of cascade tumbling with clash and spray over the lichen rocks? I go through the forests. They are full of buzz and chirp and song. I walk through the fields. Dandelions and buttercups thrown everywhere, as if from the hand of a sower. The orchards: they give me buds, and then they give me blossoms, and then they give me the ripe fruit, falling into my lap. The birds: lark and oriole and bobolink and whippoorwill, songs right out of heaven, and plumage dashed as though the rainbow had got tangled in their wings.

Beautiful world! What more can we ask for? How is it that you are not happy with such a full cup of blessings?

Well, you say I am not happy because

of sin? This is the one shadow that falls upon everything. It tracks me by day and it flies over me by night, and I can never escape it. It is true. Sin in the world, and the world becomes hell at once. It digs all our graves and brings all our tears and aches all our hearts and blights all our hopes. Is there a land where it never comes? Blessed be God; there is. Just beyond the clouds yonder, and then the ravishment of heaven. Into it "there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Thither we are going, and thither we shall be without sin. It could not be otherwise. Streets of gold, garments of white, companionship of angels, character of the Son of God. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him."

A soldier was dying in the hospital, and at the last moment he rose up in bed and cried, "Here, Here!" The attendants laid him carefully back on the pillow, and asked him what he meant. "Oh," he said, "I thought I heard the roll-call of heaven, and was only answering to my name."

God grant that when at last the roll-call shall actually come, not one of us will be absent, but redeemed at Christ's right hand, we may answer, "Here! Here!"

Taught Her a Lesson. A good story is told of the late Professor Morren, which carries with it a valuable lesson in school management. He had a high-strung Beacon Hill daniel as one of his pupils, who made herself particularly obnoxious by her haughty and even insolent bearing, displaying her contempt for all about her so markedly that it became at last unbearable.

"I knew her mother in France," said the professor, whose broken English there is no need of producing here, "and she was a most exquisitely modest and unassuming woman. But the daughter was so insolent that she had to have a lesson; so I said to her: 'Will you be so good as to remain after the lesson? I have something to tell you.' She stays, and in her haughtiest manner she says: 'You wish to speak to me?'

"Yes. You are Miss So-and-so?"  
"Yes."  
"And you live at No. — Beacon Street?"  
"Yes."  
"And your father is Mr. So-and-so?"  
"Yes."  
"And your mother is the lovely and sweet Mrs. So-and-so I have met in France?"  
"Well?"  
"Oh, I said, 'you are sure there is no mistake?'

"No mistake! What do you mean?"  
"I am exceedingly surprised that you come of such a family and so well born."

"Sir!"  
"I am much surprised. I have been sure you came of a new-rich family, some parvenu."  
"Sir!"  
"You think, Mademoiselle, I said, softening my manner, 'that the haughtiness is aristocratic. Now you will pardon an old man if I remind you that the contrary is true. I have known your mother so long that I dare to be frank with you. You have been very insolent in the class.'

"Insolent, Monsieur?"  
"Yes, Mademoiselle. You have taken this for a mark of aristocracy. So does the daughter of the Jew money-lender. You had much better copy your mother, your gentle, lady mother."

"And I made her my best bow and left her to think about it. And she was a good girl afterward: a very good girl."

Concerning this story, the Boston Courier, well says: "It is a pity this wise and shrewdly worded reproof could not sink into the hearts of many a young girl-to-day who foolishly fancies she is asserting the loftiness of her social position by an insolence which only proves that she is not sufficiently sure of her standing to cease to be troubled about it. It takes a good many generations to set one socially so high that one does not need to condescend to any human being."

Montclair Township Committee. The Montclair Township Committee passed a resolution on Monday night notifying the city of Orange that Montclair was ready to join in the construction of the trunk sewer. Another resolution was passed requesting permission from Bloomfield township to lay sewer mains through the streets of that town to reach the outlet sewer.

Assessor Morris reported that his tax duplicate would be ready in two weeks. The township Treasurer was directed to have the township note for \$5,000 discounted in anticipation of taxes.

Contractor McDowell was directed to go ahead with the macadamizing of Orange Road. The property-owners of Upper Montclair requested that the sum of \$100, deposited by them for the grading of Midland Avenue, be returned, as the petition had been rejected.

Chief Keller of the Fire Department asked that Mr. DeWitt be restrained from cutting the telephone wire that crosses his property to Hose-house, No. 2.

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